

THE SSA NEWS



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Adult Services Staff Race to Combat Alzheimer's Disease	2
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program Growing, Changing	3
SSA Services Threatened—Family Resource Centers	3
Kudos	4

Coming Soon!

- Christmas Day Holiday,
December 25, 2002
- New Year's Day
Holiday, January 1, 2003
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day Holiday, January
20, 2003



*Wishing You and Yours a
Happy and Healthy Holiday
Season!*

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR Holiday Season

With arrival of the holiday season we look at closing out another year. It seems like just yesterday that we were all concerned about Y2K electronic programming issues as the year 2000 approached, and here we are closing out 2002. The passage of time seems to be accelerating.

As always, this is a time of year to reflect and to enjoy family and friends. All of us have our own ways of enjoying this time of year

and pausing to reflect. We should take this time to focus on the positives, and there are many things to be thankful for. If we can, and many in SSA and our community do, we should take a moment to help others. SSA's Operation Santa Claus and Senior Santas program are excellent opportunities for that.

I am thankful for many things, including a top-notch group of employees

working hard to carry out SSA's mission. Because of your efforts, Orange County is a much better place for hundreds of thousands of people whose lives we have impacted during 2002. As you pause and reflect, remember your colleagues here at work. They are a great bunch of people, and you are one of them.

I want to wish all who read this the happiest holiday season and a prosperous 2003.

Condolences

Corliss Graham, a larger-than-life blues singer who for the past 27 years worked for SSA, unexpectedly passed away November 11, 2002. She will be remembered for her generous spirit and exceptionally fine voice, and the way she shared her time and talents. For several years, she was editor of the Santa Ana Regional Centre (SARC) Chronicle, organized and conducted the SARC Christmas choir, and was a major participant in the spectacular Black History celebration held at SARC each February. Corliss regularly performed in such places as Planet Hollywood and the House

of Blues, where her engaging stage presence and magnetism captivated her audience. She could, with a raised eyebrow and comedic nuance in her voice, elicit howls of laughter. Her vocal huskiness transported listeners to a time when blues began, helping us understand the traditions from which this music was born. Always, she was "one" with the musicians who backed her, and with the many admirers who flocked to hear her sing.

As if all of these extra activities were not enough, Corliss was also Director of the Sir Charles Blues Lab – Orange County Chapter,

where she worked her musical magic with the children at Orangewood. She gave her whole heart to this project and exuded joy whenever she spoke of it.

She will be missed by all who were fortunate enough to have known her.

Adult Services Staff Race to Combat Alzheimer's Disease

"Over 61,000 County residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's will benefit from these efforts..."



Adult Services staff pictured above: Liz Cvikel, Cheryl Sosa, Mary Alcala, Marilyn Godfrey, Chrisy Fong, Hal Stevens (Marilyn's friend), and Linda Elder.



Pictured above are: Rebecca Guider, Stephen Schrieber-Smith from FSS, Kevin Bigelow, Erik Fair, Luisa Camino, Maikhanh Nguyen, and Margie Bruton (in blue hat).

The Alzheimer's Association of Orange County's 9th Annual Memory Walk held on October 5, 2002 drew close to 5,000 participants. This year, three competing teams represented Adult Services: one from Adult Protective Services (APS), one from the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program, and one from the Multi-

purpose Senior Services Program (MSSP).

Last year, the Memory Walk, which is billed as the largest fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Association, generated over a half-a-million dollars to be used for research and free programs and services. Over 61,000 County residents diagnosed with Alzheimer's will benefit

from these efforts to help them, as well as their families.

Although competition was fierce between the three Adult Services teams, all participants walked for a common cause – raising money to combat Alzheimer's Disease.

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program Growing, Changing

In a June 2002 report entitled, "The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Recipient Report," the California Department of Social Services provided some eye opening information about this State program that counties are required to operate. This requirement brings a mandate that counties pay a share of the cost of the program. For SSA, it is about 22% of the cost. Given that percentage, the following information from this report is of particular interest:

IHSS is now the third largest social services program funded by the State.

It has grown by 38% since 1995's total statewide caseload of 190,000 clients to 262,000 in 1991.

54% of clients have been in the program for four years or more, and 21% for nine or more years.

67% of the caseload consists of women, half of which enter the program classified as disabled and half as aged.

IHSS is the largest personal assistance services program in the United States and is the core of California's long-term care system. The program is a state administered, county run program financed by a mix of state, federal and county funds. Individuals eligible for the program are disabled, age 65 or older, or blind and unable to live safely at home without help and also financially unable to purchase needed services. Here in Orange County, there are approximately 8,000 IHSS clients, and the program is projected to grow 24% in fiscal year 02/03.

"IHSS is the largest personal assistance services program in the United States..."

SSA Services Threatened—Family Resource Centers

SSA has built the finest network of Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in California, using state and federal funds. Much of the service infrastructure could be lost as a result of state funding reductions. The degradation of services has already begun: 18 community-based workers have lost their jobs, 120 families are no longer receiving kinship services and over 300 children are at risk of becoming county dependents. Once the impact is fully felt, it is estimated that nine of the current 19 FRC's

will no longer receive state and federal funding from SSA. The jobs lost belong to members of Orange County's poorest communities. The FRC's that may be lost will no longer be an alternative to law enforcement dealing with youth who need help, but are not yet a risk to their community. Domestic violence victims will no longer receive legal assistance, support groups and counseling in a neighborhood-based center. Their alternative will be law enforcement and the courts. Parents will not

have the training to help their children be successful in school and to learn to discipline without abusing. FRCs provide emergency assistance to families in crisis as an alternative to long-term assistance. If the state budget results in the loss of the FRC's, SSA will have lost a prevention resource that we have worked hard with the Orange County Children and Families Commission (Prop 10) to establish. SSA will continue to strive to keep as many FRC's operating as possible.

"Jobs lost belong to members of Orange County's poorest communities."

We welcome your input regarding this newsletter. For information on submitting articles, contact Debbie Kroner at (714) 541-7734
 Deborah.Kroner@ssa.ocgov.com
 or
 Sylvia Almazán at (714) 245-6274
 Sylvia.Almazan@ssa.ocgov.com

Larry Leaman, Publisher
 Debbie Kroner, Editor
 Sylvia Almazán, Assoc. Editor

Visit our web site
www.oc.ca.gov/ssa/



- * Articles for the January issue of The SSA NEWS are due to Debbie by January 9, 2003!
- * Please limit your articles to 225 words maximum. Thank you for your story!



KUDOS



Mary Harris, Deputy Director/HCA Coordinator, SSA. "I started the morning with a call from Children's Bureau announcing on behalf of the Secretary of Health and Human Services that Kinship Center has received the National 2002 Excellence in Adoption Award in the category of Support for Adoptive Families. The programs being recognized are the clinics of Kinship Center, The Adoption Clinic and Seedlings Project that you recently visited. We think this is very good news for Orange County to have been recognized for programs that demonstrate adoption excellence in two consecutive years. Last year your department was recognized for the work of the Consortium and successful recruitment of families for children. It was the vision and determination of Mary Harris, Deputy Director, that gave us the momentum to pursue the dream to develop both of these clinics." (Sent by Carol Biddle, Executive Director of Kinship Center, to Adrienne Garrison, Deputy Director, Children and Family Services.)

Medi-Cal Specialization Regional Centre Medi-Cal Staff: "I am happy to let you know how much we appreciate and rely upon SSA's involvement in the InfoVan outreach efforts. Your staff has contributed significantly to the overwhelming success of the InfoVan. From February through October 2002, the InfoVan has visited 118 sites, contacted 7,233 people and given out 9,848 pieces of information. SSA has played an integral part in these efforts. Together, we have been able to assist these populations isolated by economic, cultural, language, health, mobility or other factors. Also, because your staff is multicultural and multilingual, we are able to converse with people normally barred from accessing much needed services. The Office on Aging thanks you for the assistance you have provided this past year and looks forward to strengthening our partnership in the upcoming year." (Sent by Julie Loats, Information and Assistance Manager, Office on Aging. Forwarded by Mary Wuerfl, Deputy Director, Adult Services & Assistance Programs.)

CFS Health and Education Passport Program (HEP). A seven-year-old boy recently transitioned from a group home, to living with his older brother. As his brother was picking him up from day care, the younger boy suffered a broken arm while playing on playground equipment. The break was severe enough that it required the child to be transported to CHOC by ambulance. Fortunately, the older brother had the young boy's Health and Education Passport with him and forwarded it to CHOC's surgical team. The older brother reported that the surgeons had all the medical information and history they needed from the boy's HEP. The older brother was so appreciative of having a HEP that he called the boy's senior social worker, Barbara Page, to thank her and the CFS Group Home program's public health nurse, Carla Estrada for maintaining an accurate HEP on the boy. (Based on a message conveyed by the dependent's older brother. Forwarded by Nathan Nishimoto, Program Manager II, Children and Family Services.)

Patricia Huerta-Perales, SSW, Raul Reyes, SSW and Healthy Tomorrow's Staff. "I would like to write this letter of appreciation to the Healthy Tomorrow's staff under the supervision of Patricia Huerta. As a new principal to Franklin Elementary School, I had been hearing from the staff and from our parents of the need for parenting classes. As we worked with Raul Reyes, our Healthy Tomorrow's counselor, he offered the participation of Healthy Tomorrows as a service to the Franklin parents. Mrs. Huerta and her staff were very efficient and showed a great deal of compassion to the parents and students of Franklin School. The graduation ceremony that the staff coordinated was phenomenal. For many parents this was the first time they had been honored for their dedication to their children. That evening was a beautiful event that we hope to see again in this coming year. The number of parents that come to both classes continually surprised me. Mrs. Huerta and her staff impacted at least a third of our Franklin community. I am very much indebted to Mrs. Huerta and her support staff." (Sent by Richard Valle, Principal, Santa Ana Unified School District. Forwarded by Adrienne Garrison, Deputy Director, Children and Family Services.)